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Rusk and Senate Panel Split Over U.S. Military Commitments

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United Press International Telephoto
Secretary of State Rusk at
Senate hearing yesterday.

approval and that "about all that is left to us is to appropriate money."

Even on this subject, he complained, Congress is inadequately informed. He noted that at a recent closed session with Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara he had been unable to obtain an estimate of what the war would cost, even for the rest of the current fiscal year.

At another point, repeating his concern over Congress's lack of power to regulate United States involvements, he noted that the only formal sanction sought by the Administration for Vietnam was the Gulf of Tonkin resolution of August, 1964.

The Gulf of Tonkin resolution, requested by the President, was passed by both houses of Congress with only two dissenting votes. In it, Congress gave prior approval to "all necessary measures" taken by the President to repel or prevent aggression in Southeast Asia.

"You stand on mighty thin ice if you stand on the Tonkin Gulf resolution as the basis for the war," Mr. Stennis told Mr. Rusk.

Then, in an afterthought apparently designed to distinguish his position from that of such outright critics of the war as Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, Mr. Stennis said:

"I'm not trying to measure what you're standing on; Mr. Secretary."

Senator Symington, taking up the same point, asked if President Johnson could use United

combat troops in South Vietnam.

Senator Symington predicted gloomily that should "some hidden tripwire" bring Chinese troops into the conflict, the United States would find itself in a world war virtually alone. Mr. Rusk replied:

"The future safety of this country should not be left to the willingness of other countries to do what is vital to us."

Senator Strom Thurmond, Republican of South Carolina, condemned what he called "the weak-kneed, spineless policy of no-win."

"Senator," Mr. Rusk replied with heat, "we can have a general war any time we want it. We can move into a general war that will kill 300 million people in the first hour. But we are trying to build a little peace in the world."

He said that the United States had been trying since World War II to meet aggression with a measured response that would avoid "sliding down the slippery slope that could lead to war."

"We are too powerful to be infurited," Mr. Rusk asserted.

Discusses Other Areas

Earlier referring to the avoidance by the United States of nuclear weapons in Vietnam Mr. Rusk told Senator Stennis:

"We have, literally, a strength that goes beyond the mind of man to comprehend—at the end of the day. Our purpose is to see that we do not get to the end of the day."

Responding to other members of the committee, Mr. Rusk conducted a brief discussion of United States policy around the world.

Of the developments in Communist China, in which Defense Minister Lin Piao appears to

have emerged as second in command to Mao Tse-tung, Mr. Rusk commented that if this meant that a professional military mind was assuming more influence, it could be a good thing. Such a mind, he said, could not help but realize the dangers of a world conflict.

Of a meeting between President Johnson and President de Gaulle of France, which was proposed yesterday by Mike Mansfield, the Senate majority leader, he said only that there were no plans for such a meeting.

He told Senator Margaret Chase Smith, Republican of

Maine, that as far as he knew the Central Intelligence Agency had never attempted to usurp the making of foreign policy. The Bay of Pigs landing of 1961, he said, which had been attributed to the agency's influence, had been the full responsibility of President Kennedy and himself.

To questions by Senator Henry M. Jackson, Democrat of Washington, he said that someday the Western military alliance in Europe might shrink, but that it was still too early to say that Soviet intentions were too uncertain to make this possible for some time.

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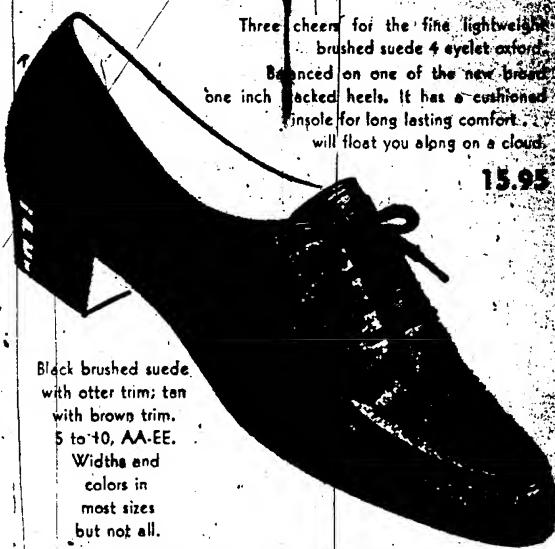
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